

REMARKS

The Office Action of February 7, 2006 has been received and its contents carefully considered. An RCE is being filed concurrently to permit further prosecution.

The present Amendment revises claim 1 to specify that “the wireless mobile LAN station of the mobile object has unique identifying information, and accepts or rejects an incoming wireless signal depending on whether identification information in the incoming wireless signal matches the unique identifying information.” This is supported (for example) by the paragraph beginning at page 12, line 18 and paragraph beginning at page 27, line 18. The present Amendment cancels claim 25 as redundant in view of the changes to claim 1.

Providing each mobile object (or mobile station) with its own identification information permits the server to detect it and communicate with it on an individual basis. The present application discloses several examples of how this ability is useful in managing a parking lot. For instance, it is possible to transmit information identifying a vacant park space to a particular mobile object carried by a driver of a car seeking to park in a certain area of the parking lot. Different parking space information can be transmitted to mobile objects in different cars, so that they will not all head for the same parking places (which might occur if the same information about available parking places is provided to a number of drivers by way of an electronic sign or some other means). Techniques disclosed in the present application can efficiently direct drivers to empty parking spaces, avoiding congestion in the parking lot and frustration of the parking lot's customers.

The present Amendment also revises dependent claim 2 to specify that the parking condition detecting means includes a sensor for optically detecting parking space identification information that is provided at each parking space. If the sensor can detect the parking space identification information (such a barcode on the floor of a parking space), the parking space is available. The presence of a car in the parking space can be detected because the car hides the parking space identification information from the sensor. The sensors picked up parking space identification information only from available parking spaces.

The present Amendment revises claim 4 considerably in few of the changes that have been made in claim 2 (from which claim 4 depends). All that is left of claim 4 is that the parking space identification information comprises a barcode.

Finally, the present Amendment adds a new dependent claim 27, which provides that the “incoming wireless signal” of claim 1 “supplies information from the server about available parking spaces that are near the mobile object.” This is supported (for example) by the Figure 6 and the passage at page 22, line 15 to page 25, line 7.

Section 2 of the Office Action rejects claims 1 and 2, along with several other claims, for obviousness based on Kirkpatrick in view of Slemmer et al (which will hereafter be called simply “Slemmer” for the sake of convenience). For the reasons discussed bellow, it is respectfully submitted that the invention now defined by claim 1 is patentable over these references, and that the invention defined by claim 2 is patentable even apart from its dependence from claim1.

The Kirkpatrick reference discloses a system in which information identifying available parking spaces is transmitted to receivers. The transmission is in a nature of

broadcast, though, and might easily induce several drivers to converge on the same empty space. Kirkpatrick's receivers do not have unique identifying information that would permit Kirkpatrick's transmitter to address them individually. As noted above, though, claim 1 now recited "the wireless mobile LAN station of the mobile object has unique identifying information," thereby permitting parking information to be transmitted to it alone.

Turning next to Slemmer, this reference teaches a system that provides vacant parking space information. The reference employs a radio link to wireless communication devices, but fails to teach the use a unique identification information in order to send parking information to some particular wireless communication device. It is therefore respectfully submitted that Slemmer and Kirkpatrick together did not suggest the invention defined by claim 1.

Since the remaining claims depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 and recite additional limitations to further define the invention, they are patentable along with claim 1. Nevertheless, two of the dependent claims will now be briefly addressed.

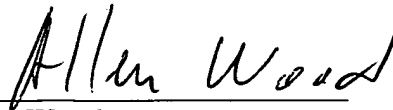
Claim 2 now provides that "parking space identification information is provided at each parking space to identify the respective parking space," and a parking condition detecting means including an optical sensor, and that a parking condition information signal indicates "that the corresponding parking space is not occupied by a vehicle if the optical sensor can sense the parking space identification information ... and indicating that the corresponding parking space is occupied by a vehicle if the optical sensor cannot sense the parking space identification information ...". Kirkpatrick's Figure 2 illustrates an optical protector arrangement, but his element 261 is simply an infra red light

transmitter and does not, in itself, provide parking space identification information that identifies the parking space. Similarly, it is respectfully submitted that Slemmer does not teach a sensor for reading particular identification information.

New dependent claim 27 provides that the “incoming wireless signal” of claim 1 “supplies information from the server about available parking spaces that are near the mobile object.” Claim 27 exploits the fact the wireless mobile LAN station of the mobile object has unique identifying information, according to claim 1, so the server can supply individualized parking information to it. This is neither disclosed nor suggested by the references.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Allen Wood". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

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